

HOW TO FIGHT VENEREAL DISEASE

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR COMBATING VENEREAL DISEASES,
80 AVENUE CHAMBERS, SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
LONDON, W.C.1.

N.C. 53.

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National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases.

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AIMS AND OBJECTS.

- (1) To provide accurate and enlightened information as to the prevalence of these diseases, and as to the necessity for early treatment.
- (2) To promote the provision of greater facilities for their treatment.
- (3) To increase the opportunities of Medical Students and Practitioners for the study of these diseases.
- (4) To encourage and assist the dissemination of a sound knowledge of the physiological laws of life in order to raise the standard both of health and conduct.
- (5) To co-operate with existing associations, to seek their approval and support, and to give advice when desired.
- (6) To arrange, in connection with such organisations, for courses of lectures, and to supervise the preparation of suitable literature.
- (7) To promote such legislative, social and administrative reforms as are relevant to the foregoing aims and objects.

CHILD BLINDNESS

Due to Venereal Diseases.



[By kind permission of the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness (Inc.)]

"More than half of all the cases of blindness among children are the results of Venereal Diseases in the parents."

*Report of Royal Commission
(p. 32).*



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A WARNING.

Every person is vitally concerned in the fight against Venereal Diseases. It is quite a mistaken idea that these diseases only come as penalties for wrongdoing.

Even in the first week of marriage it sometimes happens that they are contracted because one partner believes in a cure when a former infection is really still dormant. There have been cases of infection through using other people's towels, razors, glasses, cups, etc.—also through using public lavatories or conveniences. Such cases are not very common, but they do exist. Even leaving these out of account, there can be no question whatever that Venereal Disease is a danger for the innocent as well as for the guilty. In lawful marriage innocent wives become infected and—a still more terrible thing—innocent children are born into the world tainted, condemned to suffering and sickness from their birth. Any Doctor or Nurse will tell you how these dreadful diseases bring their scourge to those who have least deserved it. “**Syphilis of the innocent**” (*Syphilis insontium*) is a well-known term in medical books. This disease may quite easily be communicated by kissing.

Boys and Girls “going out into the world.”

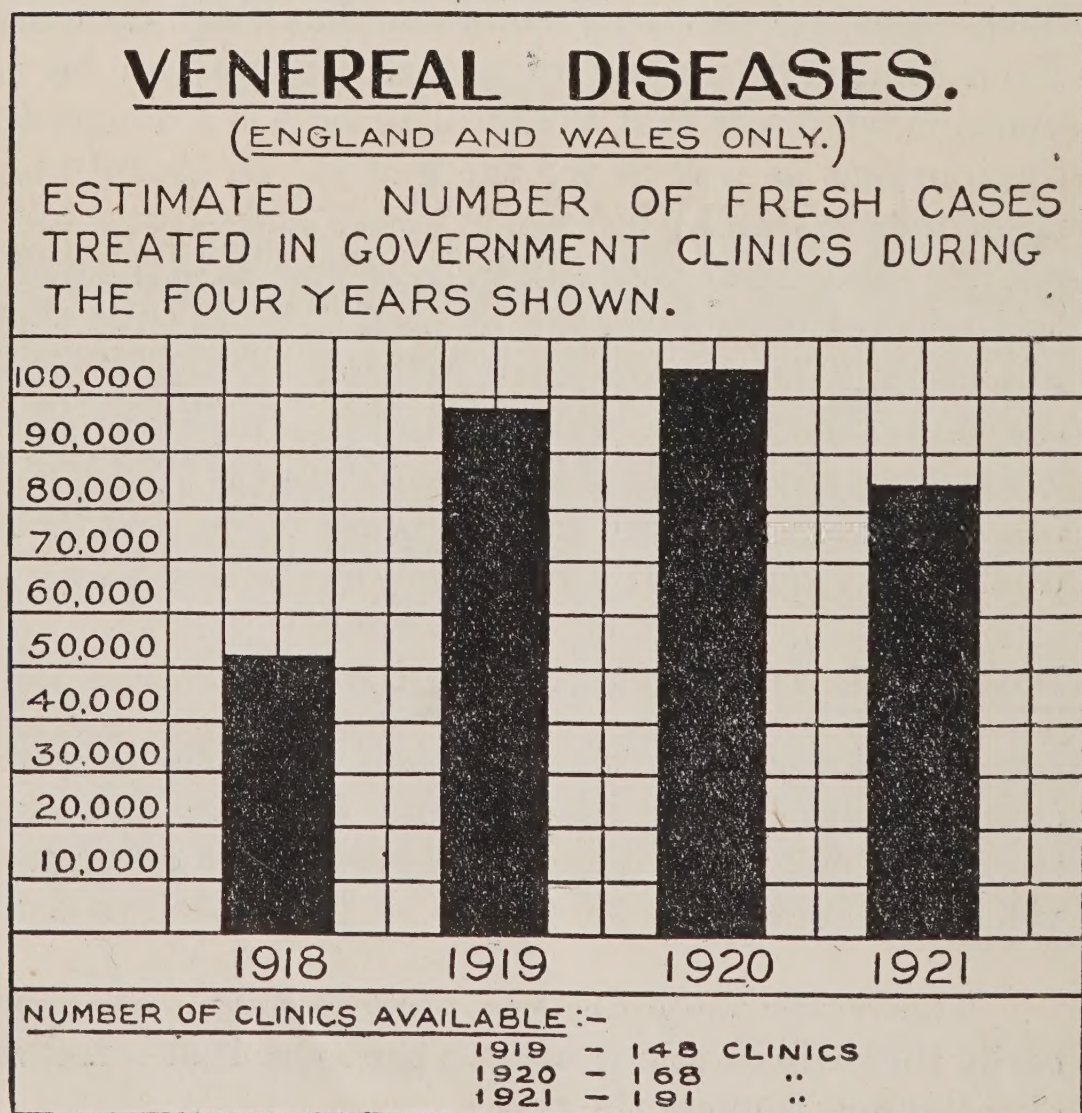
You know that temptations will come to your children—are coming now, it may be. Are you sure that your boy, with his present knowledge or ignorance, will be strong enough to resist ?

The better these diseases are controlled, the more easily they will be stamped out ; the more that is known about them, the less the risk.

If we all know, and if we all help, the appalling prevalence of Venereal Disease can be immediately reduced. The thing **must** be stamped out.

Would you not find the world a better and safer place to live in if no Venereal Diseases existed in it? In a few years they could be reduced to a mere fragment of their present terrible proportions. **Then do what you can to help.**

It is **your business** to join in this fight. You are urged to join in it not only for the sake of the community but for the sake of your family, and for your own sake.



THE DANGERS OF VENEREAL DISEASE.

The two chief Venereal Diseases are **both** extremely serious. **Gonorrhœa** ("Clap"), though less destructive than **Syphilis** ("Pox") is generally much more painful. It inflicts acute suffering and has been proved responsible for a quarter of the blindness and half the sterility in the country. It may be more stubborn to cure than Syphilis. Unless properly treated, Gonorrhœa may, and often does, bring stricture, kidney and bladder disease, impotence, chronic neurasthenia, and sometimes death itself. In the case of women it is a specially serious disease. And yet there are people who will tell you that Gonorrhœa is not of much account—that it is "no worse than a bad cold." These people **do not know**.

Syphilis is one of the most incapacitating and life-destroying diseases in existence. The late Sir William Osler, Regius Professor of Medicine in the University of Oxford, placed it "third or fourth among the killing diseases." Unless properly treated, it may lead to heart disease, deformities, locomotor ataxy, general paralysis of the insane, and many other terrible troubles. Sir William Osler further stated that a medical student who is thoroughly grounded in Syphilis and **the diseases it leads to** would have a good knowledge of **all branches of his profession**.

In 1914 a witness before the Royal Commission estimated that there were about 800,000 fresh cases of both diseases every year.

The Commission made an estimate in their report that 10 per cent. of the whole urban population at one time or another had been infected with syphilis and a larger number with gonorrhœa. Since the Report of the Royal Commission much progress has been made and 191 clinics for the free treatment of these diseases

are at work treating the infected so that their diseases may not be passed on to others. The number of new cases treated by these clinics in 1921 was considerably less than in 1920, while the attendances showed an improvement, so that there appears to have been a real diminution of disease in 1921.

Much, however, remains to be done since a conservative estimate based on the work of the clinics in 1920 shows that the fresh cases of venereal disease cannot be less than 200,000 a year.

Syphilis cannot be easily got rid of. Even if properly and immediately treated, the patient cannot be sure that he is cured for two years or, often, more; while if neglected and allowed to reach the later stages, the disease affects the entire body, and the patient may become a hideous being, loathsome to himself and to others. "Eaten up with Syphilis" is not merely a term of speech but a literal fact.

Syphilis is perhaps the commonest cause of miscarriage. Sometimes the child is still-born; or it survives for a few months or years of misery. Saturated with the disease from birth, other children may become physical and mental degenerates. A very large number are born or become blind.

It is small wonder that Sir Malcolm Morris, in his work on "The Nation's Health," should speak of the "monstrous extravagance" which "allows Venereal Disease to crowd our Asylums and Poor Law Institutions, our Blind and Deaf Schools, with its human wreckage." The nation cannot afford to go on being extravagant in this appalling way—even if money extravagance only is considered.

HOW THE NATIONAL COUNCIL IS FIGHTING VENEREAL DISEASES.

A Policy of Prevention as well as Cure.

The National Council for Combating Venereal Diseases recognises that sexual misconduct is the root cause of the evil. Innocent people would not be exposed to Syphilis or Gonorrhœa if others had not first contracted these diseases by promiscuous sexual indulgence.

If then, sexual misconduct is reduced, Venereal Disease will be reduced.

One policy which the National Council considers of prime importance, is to reduce sexual misconduct by Education, and by Entertainment and Recreation.

The Council believes that normal sex teaching should be given to the child and the adolescent ; that a proper foundation should be laid for the building up of standards of conduct. Also that adolescents and adults should be instructed in the facts concerning sex-relationship and Venereal Disease.

But these preventive measures, educational and recreational, must be supplemented by others. They do a great deal, but they do not do everything. They reduce Venereal Disease, but they do not by any means eliminate it. Above all sufficient facilities for treatment must be available so that those who have contracted the disease may be properly treated and rendered non-infective as soon as possible.

STERILITY IN WOMEN

50%

“Gonorrhœa is said to be the commonest cause both of absolute and relative sterility in women, probably 50 per cent. of all causes.”

Report of Royal Commission on Venereal Disease (p. 28.)

The more infected persons there are, and the longer each person remains infectious, the more the disease will spread. Thus cure of existing disease is a potent means of prevention.

Every legitimate means of prevention must be employed, for in spite of the relative efficacy of healthy recreation and medical skill, experience unhappily shows that there will always be some who will yield to temptation.

The whole question was thoroughly ventilated at an International Medical Conference held at Cannes in April, 1919. The Conference attached great importance to several methods ; Education, entertainment, improving and safeguarding home influence by measures to increase home comforts, encouragement of early marriage, custodial care of the feeble-minded, prevention by skilled disinfection after exposure.

The National Council is in full agreement with this policy, which it has been carrying out for the past three and a half years.

In regard to **home conditions**, the point must be urged that improper housing is a notorious cause of immorality, and that it exposes young people to venereal contagion. This evil of crowded sleeping rooms is not so flagrant as it was, but it still exists.

What has been and is being accomplished.

Reaching the youth of the country.

The Council has arranged over 800 lectures to the teachers of both elementary and secondary schools all over Great Britain. In this way many thousands of those responsible for the education of the young have been reached.

Conferences of parents have also been arranged at schools throughout the country, giving an opportunity for informing parents about Venereal Disease and for inviting them to tell their children what they ought to know about sexual dangers.

It is impressed upon teachers and parents that knowledge and truth are youth's strongest protectors ; that if children are brought up with a clean and simple knowledge of the facts of life, they will be **safeguarded**.

At a later stage, when children are leaving school and home for industrial life, those responsible are urgently asked to warn them of the dangers of Venereal Disease.

By its distributed literature, from its public platforms, in personal letters and personal conversations, the Council is continually urging that the old-fashioned policy of Repression and **Don't** should be replaced by the new and saving policy of **Do**, and that positive teaching and counter attractions should replace ignorance and idle leisure.

Young people must be told how great is the risk of contracting Venereal Disease by promiscuous intercourse ; they must be told of the results of such disease ; the facilities provided for free diagnosis and free treatment ; the importance of going **at once** to a Doctor if any symptoms appear ; the importance of immediate local cleansing with soap and water after risk has been taken.

ECONOMIC LOSS DUE TO VENEREAL DISEASE

DEAFNESS

It costs

10

times as much to educate a deaf child as a normal child.

COST OF EDUCATING DEAF CHILD

NORMAL CHILD

BLINDNESS

It costs

7

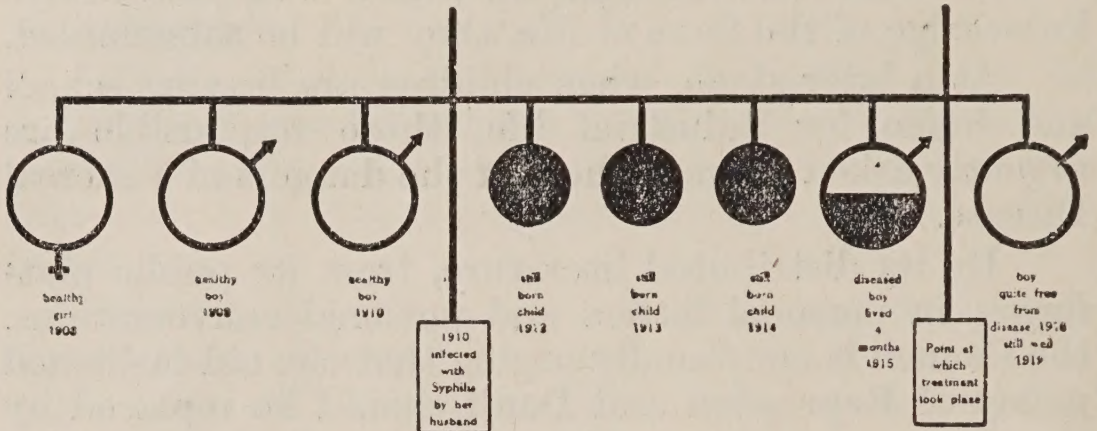
times as much to educate a blind child as a normal child.

COST OF EDUCATING BLIND CHILD

THERE ARE
THOUSANDS
OF THESE
CHILDREN.

Many of them become a financial burden on the community.

Mrs. X Married 1907
Infected 3 years after marriage



This pamphlet is based upon actual Official Statistics of U.S.A. Navy.

A TERRIBLE RECORD

"In one series of cases, 150 families where occurred 172 mis-births, and 229 while of 600 were dis-

out of 1,001 pregnancies in Syphilis existed, there carriages and still-infant deaths; live children 390 eased."

Report of the Royal Com-mission.

App. XVI.

1001 PREGNANCIES

**172
MISCARRIAGES
AND
STILL BIRTHS**

**229
INFANT
DEATHS**

**390
DISEASED**

210

Out of every 10 children at least 7 stricken by death or disease.

EARLY PREVENTIVE TREATMENT.

The National Council is compelled to concern itself not only with preventing people from running the risk of Venereal Disease by sexual misconduct, but also with preventing them from contracting Venereal Disease **after the risk has been run**. There is no moral reason whatever why the misconduct of any individual should be allowed to make him a menace to public health, as he will be if he contracts such disease. The National Council attaches great importance, therefore, to **preventive measures** and it has constantly called public attention to them.

There is no doubt that much Venereal Disease would be prevented if it were generally known that cleansing with soap and water, or better still, skilled disinfection by, or under the direction of a medical practitioner, with suitable antiseptics should be carried out within one or two hours after a risk has been taken. The sooner the disinfection, and the more skilfully it is applied, the greater the probability that the disease can be altogether prevented, the germs being killed before they develop.

Apart from absolute continence, the only sure way to avoid Venereal Disease is in a marriage where both parties have a high ideal of the married state. If a high moral standard were universal, other preventive measures would soon become unnecessary. But we must deal with life as it is. While the Council lays the utmost stress on moral propaganda, written and spoken, it cannot confine its activities to this. The world is not perfect, weakness of character, bad environments, often defeat ethical teaching.

We must protect those who have high ideals of conduct from those who, whether from defect of character or from lack of opportunity, have not these ideals.

VALUE OF EARLY TREATMENT

after exposure to risk of infection

The longer one waits
the greater the RISK

One Hour.
one per thousand.

Early Treatment taken within one hour after exposure only 0·08% infections—less than

Ten Hours.
per hundred.

Treatment taken more than ten hours after exposure 7·40% infections, or about seven

This table is based upon actual Official Statistics of U.S.A. Navy.



THE TRINITY OF MAN.

THE INFLUENCE OF IDEALS.

The Council has always recognised the extreme importance of high ideals as a fighting force against Venereal Disease. Ideals provide the emotional motive power that determines action ; the ideals held by youth go very far to influence conduct.

First, teach your boy or girl the facts of life, plainly and simply ; then you can build on this teaching the ideals of love, marriage and parenthood.

Ideals are the real things that count. They are readily taken up and assimilated by girls and boys as they grow into men and women ; adolescence is the period when the higher faculties develop into maturity, no less than the bodily functions.

Young people who learn a high standard of thought at about 16, have within themselves the most powerful and lasting of all safeguards. This is the more urgent, in that the age-period of 16-25 is immeasurably the most important as regards venereal affections. Persons who keep clear of promiscuous sex relations for the first few years of adult life rarely fall into such habits afterwards.

Frankness in education will help and not hinder the operation of such idealism.

Apart from the potentialities of idealism, the combat with disease would end in defeat.

The ethical side of the Council's work is growing in importance. The demand for an equal moral standard will soon, we may hope, compel Society to embody in its several social customs a high ideal of sexual morality.

An innate sense of decency and cleanliness must be a factor in preventing Venereal Disease. It is a sense which is probably more strongly developed in the British than in any other race.

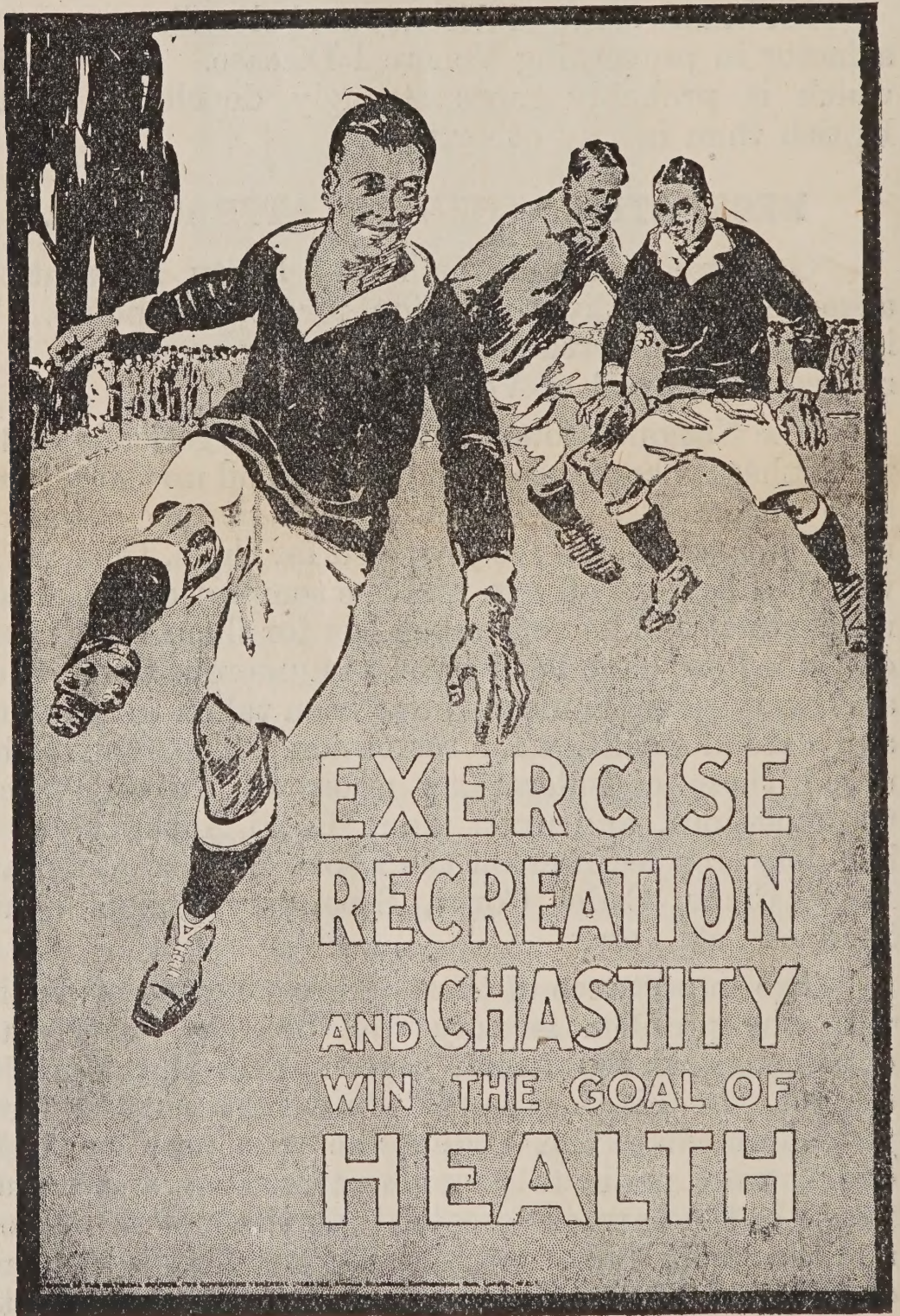
RECREATION—COUNTER ATTRACTIONS.

One great reason for moral laxity in youth is absence of healthy recreation for leisure hours. To increase the opportunities for healthy recreation is to reduce the spread of Venereal Disease.

The National Council has acted energetically on the belief that if people are encouraged to fill up their leisure time with wholesome interests, if wholesome entertainment and recreation are provided for them, their minds will thus be kept off sex, and the temptations to sexual misconduct will be very much less for them. Addresses on these lines have been given at numerous Conferences and every possible means have been taken to stimulate and extend facilities for recreation. The Council has urged these considerations upon all existing Social Organisations, and upon many Local Authorities. It has delivered lectures on the above lines to Girls' and Boys' Clubs, Cadet Corps, Secondary School Senior Students, etc., etc.

The importance of these indirect means of dealing with the problem is very well brought out by the experiences of the Army, especially in the Aldershot district. In this Command during the twenty or thirty years immediately preceding the war, very successful efforts were made to provide attractions and amusements in the barracks greater than those of the streets, and the result is reflected in the figures for the incidence of Venereal Disease in this Command. In 1885, at the

beginning of this period, the number of cases of Venereal Disease per thousand men was 321·7 at Aldershot as against 275·4 for the whole of the United Kingdom. These numbers gradually diminished until in 1913 the corresponding figure for Aldershot was 29·8 against 50·0 for the whole of the United Kingdom.



IMPORTANT FACTS THAT SHOULD BE KNOWN IF THE DISEASE HAS DEVELOPED.

As soon as symptoms of Venereal Disease have appeared, there is only one course to pursue in order to obtain a speedy cure ; **go to a Doctor or the nearest Hospital AT ONCE**—this has been the urgent recommendation of the National Council from their platforms, in their distributed literature—ever since the Council was formed.

Delay is sheer madness. It means risking being smashed up for life ; it often means passing on the infection to the patient's family, and to others. The dangers of delay are incalculable.

It is very important that the public should know what the symptoms of these diseases are, and how soon they develop. In the case of Syphilis they take from ten days to six weeks, or occasionally longer ; in the case of Gonorrhœa from three days to ten days—or rarely, to three weeks. The first symptom of Syphilis is a sore, often no more than a small pimple, on some part of the body, usually where sexual contact has taken place. The first symptom of Gonorrhœa is a discharge or burning sensation when passing water. Those who have taken risks should watch carefully for the first signs of these diseases. If they act at once, they may be cured very rapidly, if not, the cure will take many weeks, perhaps months or years.

DANGER OF “QUACKS.”

“ Quack ” treatment is worse than useless. It is very dangerous and has now been made illegal and punishable. “ Quacks ” sometimes give temporary relief, but they do not cure the disease ; the germs remain, and the patient passes on the disease to others, even if nothing worse happens to him. Days lost in drugging by “ quacks ” are paid for by years of suffering. “ ‘ Quackery ’ takes the money and leaves the disease.” Self-drugging is as dangerous as “ quackery.”

FREE AND SECRET TREATMENT.

Skilled treatment is **FREE** in most Hospitals all over the country, and is as confidential and secret as in private consulting rooms. Authorities are even allowed to pay train fares of patients to Hospitals. Application should be made to the Medical Officer of Health.

WHEN THE SYMPTOMS DISAPPEAR.

Disappearance of symptoms does not **necessarily** mean that the disease is cured. It may lie hidden for months or even years. The patient should on no account interrupt or discontinue treatment, or recommence intercourse, **until pronounced cured and free from infection by the Doctor.**

ECONOMIC LOSS DUE TO VENEREAL DISEASE

GENERAL PARALYSIS
of the Insane directly
due to Syphilis costs
the community

£ 90,000

every year.



Other forms of IN-
SANITY due to Syphilis
costs the community
at least another

£ 60,000

per year.



The loss of working power to the Nation due to Venereal
Disease is incalculable.

INSANITY AND SYPHILIS.



15%

of the male admissions to the
Asylums of large cities of Great
Britain are cases of General
Paralysis of the Insane due to
Syphilis.

The Royal Commission Report.